

# Golden Lane at Prague Castle Finally to Be Opened after Renovation

Golden Lane, situated at Prague Castle, will be accessible again, after more than a year's renovation, from 1st June. The main aim of the construction work was to repair an out-of-date sewerage system that had jeopardised the stability of local buildings. The small houses of the Golden Lane also underwent significant changes and will show visitors a late baroque goldsmith's workshop, a Renaissance tavern, a herbalist's and a famous fortune-teller's house, for example.

## No Gold - No Alchemists

[Golden Lane](#) was built after the construction of Prague Castle's northern fortification. Northern bailey premises were used to build humble houses that are today the last remains of minor buildings at [Prague Castle](#). Legend says it gained its name thanks to gold that local alchemists attempted to produce there. However, there were no alchemists actually living in Golden Lane, and the origin of the name itself is far from flattering: it is said to have been based on the colour of urine and faeces messing up the lane. It is no wonder – there were only two primitive toilets for sixteen houses.

Servants and shooters had lived in these houses and they were inhabited until the Second World War. However, even in the interwar era adjustments were made with regard to the picturesque character of Golden Lane. Writer [Franz Kafka](#) lived in house no. 22 from 1916 to 1917.

## Fortune-Teller, Tavern and Jail

The appearance of Golden Lane as we know it today was influenced by artist Jiří Tmka, to some degree: the facades of the picturesque small houses - that had been only grey until that time - were painted according to his project from the 1950s. All of the roofs have also been repaired and the houses have now new heated floors and last but not least: their stability was also ensured during the renovation. A number of these houses feature new permanent exhibitions that will present visitors life in this part of Prague Castle from the 17th century until 1953, when the last inhabitants moved out.

The very first house, no. 12 near a tower called Daliborka, will take you dozens of years back in time: the home of Josef Kazda, an amateur film historian, is revived there, with a projection screen that features films depicting the castle in the beginnings of cinematography. In the next house, painted yellow, you can see how fortification defenders, known for their uniforms as the Red Shooters, used to live under the reign of [Rudolf II](#). This house is probably the smallest residential building in the whole of Prague - it is an alcove in the original fortification that was walled in.

The blue house, no. 14, presents the home of a Prague renowned fortune-teller called Matylda Průšová, known under her alias, "Madame de Théb" (Thebes). Her life was very interesting and a very sad one at the same time: she lived in the house before the Second World War to eventually die as a result of torture during Gestapo interrogations. In the neighbouring house you will find an exhibition of a goldsmith's workshop and in the next house, no. 16, there is a tavern with a kitchen equipped with an open fire. An exhibition in houses no. 24 and 25 will present you the history and life of the last inhabitants of Golden Lane from the 1950s. The next house is dedicated to a seamstress that worked there. The last house in the Lane is a red one and can be found next to the "White Tower". It is a house of a bonesetter and you will see many herbs she used for healing.

A defence passage on the fortification will also be accessible, as well as a former jail for the members of the aristocracy. One of them was the famous alchemist, Robert Kelley. A staircase in house no. 12 will take you to a terrace in front of the "Daliborka" tower. This cylindrical cannon tower was part of the Jagiellon fortification and its lower storey was used as a jail since its beginnings: the first and the most famous prisoner at the same time was a knight called Dalibor of Kozojedy, imprisoned there in 1498. Another famous prisoner, an East Bohemian baron called František Antonín Špork, was a renowned lover and patron of the arts living in the 18th century.

All of the Golden Lane houses are equipped with glass entrance halls through which you can see the individual exhibitions. Their equipment and design were also made by film specialists from the Barrandov film studios. Golden Lane will be ceremoniously opened precisely at noon on 1st June.

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